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20 October 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT : Problems Posed by Office of Defense Mobilization Planning for Permanent Dispersal.

- REFERENCES :
- (A) Memorandum for the Record Dated 17 September 1953, Subject: "Meeting Held on 17 September 1953 in the Office of Defense Mobilization to Discuss Vulnerability of Washington and Analyze Necessity for Dispersal of Government Activities" - CIA TS No. 22590.
 - (B) Memorandum to Acting Deputy Director (Admin.) from Director of Security, Dated 28 September 1953, Subject: Same as Reference (A).
 - (C) Letter from this Agency to the Director, Office of Defense Mobilization, Dated 14 Oct. 1953, Reporting on Sites of 50 Acres or More, 20-80 Miles from Washington, D.C.

1. Attached hereto is letter dated 16 October 1953 and received 19 October 1953 from the Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization to the Director of Central Intelligence, requesting certain information as to dispersal of functions.

2. The following observations are submitted in connection with the problems posed by this entire matter:

a. The distinction between relocation (involving the activation of the headquarters of this Agency at our emergency site, manned by a selected Emergency Force of 600, upon the occurrence of an enemy attack on Washington) and dispersal (meaning a present permanent decentralization of all or portions of the functions and units to places at some distance from Washington) should be borne in mind.

b. The mission and functions of the Central Intelligence Agency, and the relationship between it and other vital defense elements of the Government such as the Department of Defense and the Department of State, are such that the policy governing the dispersal of those elements of the Government and the locations to which they are dispersed should be known to us and should be taken into consideration in formulating our own plans.

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c. We have been informed privately that the Office of Defense Mobilization is seeking similar information with respect to all other elements of the Executive Branch of the Government from sources within the Bureau of the Budget rather than from the individual agencies themselves, at least initially. The Central Intelligence Agency has been accorded individual and preferential handling in this matter by direct solicitation from the Office of Defense Mobilization, in view of the nature of our Agency's business. Within the Office of Defense Mobilization, the responsibility for the preparation of the plan for submission to the President is vested in Hon. Henry N. Parkman, Assistant Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization for Non-Military Defense, assisted by Mr. Henry F. Hurley, Director of the Continuity of Government Division, and Mr. A. Russell Ash, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for Alert Planning. My own source of official contact in the matter is with Messrs. Hurley and Ash. I have been informed that Mr. Hurley is the focal point of collection of all of the data from the Bureau of the Budget regarding the other agencies of the Government, and he will make this available to me as it becomes available to him, to assist us in our planning.

d. The whole question of dispersal, in general, and our role in such a program, in particular, is fraught with many basic considerations which should be thoroughly determined before the matter is made known to the public or submitted to the Congress. However, the questions posed by the attached ODM letter of 16 October 1953 do not permit of discussion or analysis of any of these basic points at this time. I feel that we are bound to comply with the requirements expressed in the letter, without reservation. However, it is to be hoped that some opportunity will be given the Director of Central Intelligence (perhaps through his membership in the National Security Council) to be heard on his views regarding the whole philosophy and wisdom of the basic underlying concepts of dispersal policy.

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Enclosure;

Ltr. 16 Oct. '53 from
Dir., ODM to DCI

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